



THE  
JUBILEE CENTRE  
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# Schools Gratitude Day

Say 'Thank You' on Schools Gratitude Day  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Teacher's Inspiration Pack



*Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others.*

Marcus Tullius Cicero

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## The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (JCCV)

The Jubilee Centre is a unique and leading centre for the examination of how character and virtues impact on individuals and society. The Centre was founded in 2012 by Professor James Arthur. Based at the University of Birmingham, it has a dedicated team of 30 academics from a range of disciplines: **philosophy, psychology, education, theology** and **sociology**.

With its focus on excellence, the Centre has a robust and rigorous research and evidence-based approach that is objective and non-political. It offers world **class** research on the importance of developing good character and virtues and the benefits they bring to individuals and society. In undertaking its own innovative research, the Centre also seeks to partner with leading academics from other universities around the world and to develop strong strategic partnerships.

A key conviction underlying the existence of the Centre is that **the virtues that make up good character can be learnt and taught**. We believe these have largely been neglected in schools and in the professions. It is also a key conviction that the more people exhibit good character and virtues, the healthier our society. As such, the Centre undertakes development projects seeking to **promote the** practical applications of its research evidence.

The **JCCV** has focussed on the virtue of gratitude during its first phase of work. The Centre has undertaken the largest ever UK study of gratitude, which is detailed in the [An Attitude for Gratitude](#) research report. In addition, the Centre has undertaken and commissioned several smaller projects which have looked in more detail at gratitude in the local community, as seen in the [Good Neighbours in a Good Neighbourhood](#) and [Give Thanks, Give Back](#) projects. The JCCV has focussed on the link between the research that it has undertaken and its practical application, through its development projects. The [Thank You Film Awards](#) and [Thank You Letter Awards](#) place an explicit focus on gratitude, and challenging young people to capture who and what they are grateful to and for on camera or in a letter. [The Jubilee Awards for Service](#) and [Jubilee Youth Awards](#) recognise and show gratitude to those who undertake meaningful social action - practical action in the service of others to create change – with ceremonies held in the Houses of Parliament.

For more information about the Centre and to find out how you can get involved in other Centre projects, [jubileecentre@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:jubileecentre@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

To read more and to subscribe to our newsletter visit our website : [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk)

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# Schools Gratitude Day

**Schools Gratitude Day** is an opportunity for schools and teachers to **recognise, promote** and **celebrate gratitude** within their school community. This pack includes ideas to help teachers and children take part in an inspirational Schools Gratitude Day.

Taking part in the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues Schools Gratitude Day activities supports you and your pupils, through a range of activities, to:

- **learn about gratitude and how practising gratitude can benefit you and those around you;**
- **think about why gratitude is such an important virtue;**
- **think about the people you are grateful to and let them know why you are grateful to them.**

# What is good about gratitude?

Saying a simple **'thank you'** can make a difference. Gratitude has been proven to be very beneficial in the world of **positive psychology**, with numerous benefits, both individually and interpersonally. For instance, gratitude can play a positive role in:

- **how much people 'give back';**
- **increased and maintained subjective well-being;**
- **increased satisfaction with life;**
- **improved mental health.**

# What is in this pack?



Having conducted extensive research into the attitudes to gratitude of the UK public, the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues has produced this teaching pack for schools. Included in the pack are **a series of activities and resources** which will **enable teachers and children to learn about and celebrate gratitude**.

These resources are designed to **recognise, promote** and **celebrate gratitude** in the school community, **through storytelling, letter writing, discussion** and **reflection**. The activities can be developed and altered to meet the needs of each school taking part. Many activities can be used as individual, small group, class or whole-school approaches. **A whole-school approach to Schools Gratitude Day is recommended**, but schools have the freedom to mould the day as they see appropriate.

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# Thank You Letters



Is there someone in your life who inspires, supports or helps you in some way?

Write a **letter** to say 'Thank You'.

Ask pupils to think about who they are thankful to and why.

Encourage them to express their thanks in a letter. Hold a competition in your school, where the best letters will be recognised and rewarded.

## Be creative with your letter

Decorate your letter with pictures or artwork

Write a poem

Create a cartoon

Use photographs and captions

You can download a Thank You Letter template from [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/thankyouletters](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/thankyouletters)

*The Jubilee Centre's annual Thank You Letter Awards is a national competition which aims to recognise and reward young people between the ages of 5-16 who have shown gratitude to others in their everyday lives.*

Find out more at [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/thankyouletters](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/thankyouletters)

# Thank You Letter Ceremony

Recognise those pupils who have shown gratitude through writing **Thank You Letters** by hosting an awards ceremony in your school.

Reward the most inspiring letters in your school with certificates or prizes. Present these in a school assembly and acknowledge children for expressing gratitude.



If you wish to enter the 2017 Thank You Letter Awards contest, contact Mat Butcher [m.butcher@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.butcher@bham.ac.uk)

# Gratitude Visit

Give pupils the opportunity to **show gratitude** to those in the **local community** who support them by inviting people from the **local community** into school for a 'gratitude visit'.

Hold an open discussion in the classroom about how these people help and support the community and why we are grateful for the work they do.

Ask questions about the visitors' roles in the community.

Possible invitees include:

**Parents**

**School caretaker**

**School cooks**

**Teachers/Nurse workers**

**Emergency service personnel**

**Social workers**

**Doctors/nurses**

**Dentist**

**Vet**

Pupils can make a thank you card for visitors expressing their gratitude (templates available at [www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk)).



Invite people who have been recognised in pupils' **Thank You Letters** and say 'thank you' in person.

# Thank Chew Party



**Celebrate the people who your pupils are grateful to** by inviting them to a party afternoon or to share lunch. Pupils prepare a meal to say 'thank you' to the people in their lives who make a difference. Play party games and share in an afternoon of fun where pupils can **show gratitude** to the significant people in their lives.



Cross-curricula links can be made to **Design and Technology**.

# A Search for its Origin

Challenge pupils to investigate the stories behind and origins of common objects found in the classroom or at home. Pupils can learn more about the processes and stages involved in how objects we often take for granted are made. Encourage pupils to show gratitude for these objects and the people who work to create them for us.

Provide groups of children with a variety of objects (examples; ruler, pencil, book, DVD).

## Ask the children a series of questions:

What is it used for?

What is it made of?

Where does it come from?

Who has made it?



Cross-curricula links can be made to Design and Technology, Art and Design and Science.

# Gratitude Tree

Discuss what pupils enjoy doing in their lives outside school. Pick out examples where pupils rely on someone or something else to do what they enjoy. Explain that it is important that we should be grateful for these people, and not take them for granted. Make a list of examples, e.g. parents, teachers, carers, sports coaches.

Provide pupils with paper leaves on which they can write what they enjoy and who they are grateful to for helping them do what they enjoy. Younger pupils can write who they are grateful to. Bring children back together and get them to add their leaf to a tree; build the *gratitude tree*.



**This tree can be displayed in class or could be displayed centrally for the whole school to get involved. Put these trees on show for visitors to see how grateful your school is.**

The below links are to leaf templates which may be useful when teaching the 'Gratitude Tree' activity.

[Twinkl](#) (Log in required)

[DLTK-Kids](#) (Free)

[Coloring.ws](#) (Free)

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# Gratitude Stories

Download and read one or more of the following stories. Ideal for:

- **whole-school assembly;**
- **whole-class discussion or reflection;**
- **guided reading;**
- **group work;**
- **individual readers;**

**comprehension activities.** • **Shooting Hoops:** A backyard game of basketball between friends leads to new insights about a neighbour.

• **The Blue Oasis:** A birthday party at the local swimming pool turns out to be more eventful than anticipated.

• **The Class Councillor:** A quitter member of class rises to the occasion in becoming the class councillor.

These stories encourage pupils to think about gratitude and to reflect on the gratitude they show to others. The stories tap into young people's conceptions of gratitude; when is appropriate to be grateful? When is it not appropriate to be grateful? Each story is embedded in a short workbook which provides brief activities for pupils to complete to aid their comprehension and encourage further reflection on gratitude. The stories and workbooks may also be used as an opportunity to discuss other values that the pupils think are important, such as honesty and compassion. Each story takes 10-15 minutes to read out to a class. The questions in each workbook take 20-30 minutes to complete.

Stories can be found at [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/schoolsgratitudeday](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/schoolsgratitudeday)

Use the stories as part of a class assembly to the rest of the school.

*“Gratitude makes sense out of our past, brings peace for today and creates vision for tomorrow.”*

Melody Beattie

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# Gratitude Through Film



Watch and listen to the benefits of **gratitude** and **reflection**.

To hear what other people are grateful for and to see what others '**give back**' to their community, follow the links below.

## Thank You Film Awards

**Thank You Film Awards 2015 (also suitable for primary schools):** Hear about what other young people from around the UK are grateful for in these short *thank you films*:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZk31eeX-dEfohCKD6uD7o7ZE-hJnyHNU>

## Short Documentaries

**Give Thanks Give Back** (13:16 mins): The *Give Thanks-Give Back* project explored the relationship between gratitude and service in three schools in the wider Birmingham and Coventry area. The main aim of the project was to explore the ways in which people 'give back' to their community.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtlztKub6oQ>

**Reflections on Gratitude** (14:21 mins): This short film explores questions such as: *What is gratitude? What are the benefits of gratitude? Is gratitude a moral virtue or obligation?*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFx8eZC9bcQ>

**Gratitude in Britain** (29:14): In 2015, the Jubilee Centre released a short film which asked the people of Britain 'what are you grateful for?' Also see activity '*Gratitude in Britain*'.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfPEzPA\\_XnU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfPEzPA_XnU)

## Other films of interest

**A Question of Character?** (49:58 mins): This short documentary explores the place of character and virtues in the education of young people today, and in society at large.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvOI6riltzw>

Or you can watch the **A Question of Character? Promo** (2:24 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouHugNGYQrk>



Challenge pupils to make their own 'thank you' films and hold an awards ceremony in school.

# Jubilee Centre Primary Programme of Study

## Summer Term – Gratitude

[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/primaryprogramme](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/primaryprogramme)

The Jubilee Centre's Primary Programme of Study includes **lessons on gratitude** for all Primary age groups from Reception to Year 6. Activities range from challenging pupils to create picture journals about who they are grateful to, to pupils interviewing their peers about something they are grateful for in their lives.

The Primary programme of Study is available online (via above link) and in hard copy. To request your copy, contact Mat Butcher [m.butcher@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.butcher@bham.ac.uk)

## Gratitude in Britain



In 2015, the Jubilee Centre released a short film which asked the people of Britain;

**What are you grateful for?**

**Gratitude in Britain:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfPEzPA\\_XnU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfPEzPA_XnU)

The film shows different conceptions of gratitude, how different people can be grateful for different things and how being grateful can affect you in different ways.

Show the film to pupils. Ask pupils about the different lives of the people in the film.

**Questions might include:**

Who do you identify with the most and why?

What did you learn about the benefits of gratitude and being grateful?

What might you do differently in your life, having watched the film?



**Challenge pupils to make their own 'thank you' films and hold an awards ceremony in school.**

*“Happiness depends upon ourselves”*

Aristotle

# Useful Websites

**Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues' Character Education Resources:**  
[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/charactereducationresources](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/charactereducationresources)

**Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues' Programmes of Study:**

**Primary (Summer Term - Gratitude):**  
[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1635/primary-programme-of-study](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1635/primary-programme-of-study)

**Secondary (Resource 25 – Building the Virtue of Gratitude):**  
[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1636/secondary-programme-of-study](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1636/secondary-programme-of-study)

**The Knightly Virtues 'Virtues Toolkit':**  
[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/knightlyvirtuesresources](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/knightlyvirtuesresources)

**The Knightly Virtues 'The Merchant of Venice':**  
[www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/knightlyvirtuesresources](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/knightlyvirtuesresources)

**Gratitude Activities for the Classroom:** 15 simple child friendly gratitude activities ideal for the classroom.  
[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/gratitude\\_activities\\_for\\_the\\_classroom](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/gratitude_activities_for_the_classroom)

**Six Classroom Activities to Nurture Gratitude:**  
[http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_curr/classroom-activities-character-development-thankful-gratitude.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/classroom-activities-character-development-thankful-gratitude.shtml)

**Spreading Gratitude Rocks:**  
<http://www.spreadinggratituderocks.com/#!lesson-plan-downloads/cxah>

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it”

William Arthur Ward

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